

**POSITION STATEMENT  
TENNESSEE BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS'  
COMMITTEE ON PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT**

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**Competence and Re-Entry to the Active Practice of Medicine  
as a Physician Assistant**

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The ability to practice as a physician assistant results from a complex interaction of knowledge, physical skills, judgment and character tempered by experience leading to competence. Maintenance of competence requires a commitment to lifelong learning and the continuous practice of medicine as a physician assistant. Absence from active practice leads to the atrophy of the ability to practice competently.

It is the position of the Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners' Committee on Physician Assistants that practitioners seeking licensure or reactivation of a previously issued license, who have had an interruption, for whatever reason, in the continuous practice of medicine as a physician assistant must reestablish, to the Committee's satisfaction, their competence to practice medicine as a physician assistant safely. In making decisions regarding competency to practice safely, the Committee will be guided by the following:

Physician Assistants who have not practiced for more than two (2) years, but less than ten (10) shall:

**STEP 1. The applicant must appear before the Committee for an evaluation of the circumstances that led to being out of clinical practice. If the Committee determines that the applicant is suitable for re-entry to practice, a determination relative to the appropriate re-training will be made based on the number of years absent from clinical practice as set forth below:**

1. ABSENCE FROM PRACTICE FOR TWO (2) TO FIVE (5) YEARS:

(a) Six (6) weeks clinical rotation in primary care. The course content shall be determined by the institution but shall include instruction in pharmacology.

2. ABSENCE FROM PRACTICE FOR FIVE (5) TO SEVEN (7) YEARS:

(a) Twelve (12) weeks of clinical rotations in primary care. The course content shall be determined by the institution but shall include instruction in pharmacology.

3. ABSENCE FROM PRACTICE FOR SEVEN (7) TO NINE (9) YEARS:

(a) Eighteen (18) weeks of clinical rotations in primary care. The course content shall be determined by the institution but shall include instruction in pharmacology.

4. Prior to the conclusion of the rotations, the applicant shall demonstrate competence in pharmacology by examination. The method, frequency and content of the assessment shall be left to the discretion of the institution.

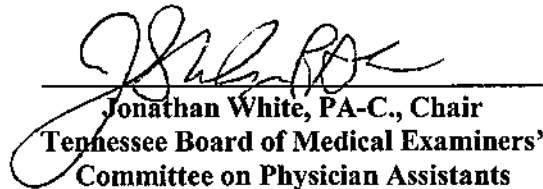
**STEP 2.** Upon successful completion of the training, the institution shall issue an official document indicating a passing grade to the applicant and cause such document to be mailed to the Committee's administrative office.

**STEP 3.** The applicant presents the official document to the Committee's administrative staff. The administrative staff will issue the license as directed by the Committee at the applicant's initial interview.

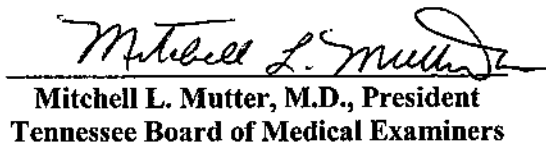
It is the Committee's intention that any applicant required to enter re-training programs must do so within eighteen (18) months. Further, the applicant shall bear the responsibility for all fees and costs incurred for the required training. Finally, the Committee leaves to the applicant the right to select a training venue that is geographically appropriate to his residence, whether in state or out.

**NOTE: Physician Assistants who have been out of practice for more than ten (10) years will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.**

Adopted by the Board of Medical Examiners' Committee on Physician Assistants on this 9<sup>th</sup> day of July 2010.

  
Jonathan White, PA-C., Chair  
Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners'  
Committee on Physician Assistants

Adopted by the Board of Medical Examiners on this 21<sup>st</sup> day of July 2010.

  
Mitchell L. Mutter, M.D., President  
Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners